

## Shakespeare by percyandnico

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**Summary:** Eleven is not so fond of Shakespeare – at least not until she has a studying session with Mike discovering a new, romantic side she hadn't ever seen.

## Shakespeare

Eleven huffed as she checked the hour for the third time in ten minutes.

Three-five-five – or well, three fifty-five.

She had been learning lots of things between school, Hopper's tutoring and the help she received from her friends plus Mike.

Yes, Mike was no longer just 'friend', as Max tended to remind her teasingly, now they were *dating* which seemed a big thing from the way the boys said it. To Eleven, anyway, it was just like it had always been: magical.

He was the same sweet, tender, funny and caring Mike only now she got to get kissed and they held hands and everything was perfect.

Today was not a good day for her, as she only grew impatient with each passing moment; if there was a thing she was sure of, it was that Sundays weren't meant to study all day long.

She didn't dislike school, mind you, she loved it, but out of all the things she was learning, she found English the most difficult of them all.

One would think Maths, or Biology, but with all those new words and new concepts English really made her go crazy – and Shakespeare? She sure wasn't a fan, as his intricate phrases and his unusual words made her head feel like a balloon about to explode.

Finally, four-zero-zero – four o' clock.

"Dad!" she called immediately, stuffing her backpack with the notebook she was trying to concentrate on earlier.

Just like Mike had gone from 'friend' to 'boyfriend', Hopper had now become 'dad', a sort of natural process in which she had woken up one day and bluntly asked "Can we go pick up some chocolate before we go to school, dad?"

And Hopper had almost teared up at the sound of that harmonic melody composed by a single syllable – but that, is a completely different story.

"I know, I know" Hopper grumbled getting up from his comfortable position on the sofa "you have your little study encounter with the Wheeler boy. Jesus Christ, you're not willing to waste a second, are

ya?"

Eleven smiled brightly and shook her head violently, wrapping a big blue scarf that covered her face 'til her ears around her neck; she found it amusing, that her dad still refused to call her boyfriend by his name.

"Put on your jacket" Hopper scolded her, eyeing her from head to toe "it's freezing outside".

The girl apparently was in love with man clothing, so except a few things she owned all kinds of boyish things: flannels, big sweatshirts and so on. Hopper didn't really mind – it was just clothes –, he found it quite amusing because everything was bigger on her thin figure and she looked just adorable.

Hopper had been giving her his usual warnings about being serious, concentrating on studying and so on and so forth but the more they neared the Wheeler's house, the more she tuned his voice out.

"Bye!" she quickly said before the car even stopped, shouldering her backpack and running to Mike who was *casually* walking by the window when she arrived, just in time to greet her at the door.

"El" Mike laughed as she whined when he mentioned starting to study "you know we have to do this, so better to get it over with, right? What subject could be so bad you–"

"Oh" he said as he looked at the big red title: Shakespeare, at the top of the page; he actually liked literature, but he understood why Eleven might be so concerned about it all – it *was* difficult, after all.

"Don't worry, we've got this" he smiled at her "can you show me your notes? So we can check out the poem you need to study".

Eleven handed her notebook to Mike and he looked it over, smiling when he was almost finished "You only made four mistakes, El! You're doing great".

She looked at him with big, happy eyes and for a second he got lost in the sweetness of that glance.

"Okay, so" he cleared his throat and quickly scanned the page to find the notes "page 254: *If I should think of love, I'd think of you*".

Their cheeks flushed red as he read the title, no need to explain it as Eleven understood it was a love poem.

"Okay, so...underline the words you don't understand, then we'll copy them on your notebook" he instructed, and she got her pencil ready.

*"If I should think of love,*

*I'd think of you, your arms uplifted,  
Tying your hair in plaits above,  
The lyre shape of your arms and shoulders,  
The soft curve of your winding head.  
No melody is sweeter, nor could Orpheus  
So have bewitched. I think of this,  
And all my universe becomes perfection".*

As Nancy passed by the basement's door, she stopped abruptly when she heard Mike's voice reciting a Shakespeare's poem – really now, he was not only a nerd but a *romantic* one?

Then her eyes widened when, peering inside, she saw El sitting next to him staring in awe. Biting on her lip to suppress a smile, she silently closed the door and let the two have their moment.

Eleven was watching carefully as Mike's full lips pronounced those sweet words, understanding most of it but missing some parts, mesmerized by the way his voice turned into a sweet, slightly deeper one.

She couldn't tear her eyes away from his lips not even when she underlined the new words, feeling too drawn in by the slowness and carefulness with which each word was being said, and blushing as the poem got more and more romantic as it went on.

*"But were you in my arms, dear love,  
The happiness would take my breath away,  
No thought could match that ecstasy,  
No song encompass it, no other worlds.  
If I should think of love,  
I'd think of you".*

Mike looked up with red cheeks as he finished his reading, finding El's stare on him only to make him blush more.

"Okay, let me see..." he said, clearing his throat once again "so, let's look these words up on the dictionary and then we can go on".

As she wrote down, her hand brushed against Mike's and she looked at him biting her lower lip, then narrowed her eyes and focused again on her paper.

"Who was Orpheus?" she asked, spelling the name with cautiousness as Will had taught her – 'you don't need to rush, take your time with

long or difficult words'.

"Orpheus is a mythological Greek musician, poet and most importantly prophet – someone that can somehow see the future. Pretty cool, huh? In most of the stories about him, he has this incredible ability to sort of hypnotize people and animals with his music – there's also" another myth about him, and how he saved his wife from the Underworld, but maybe we'll save it for later. Let's get back to the sonnet..."

As Mike explained what a sonnet was and everything about Shakespeare's sonnets, Eleven started to like them more and more. Understanding something truly made it look totally different – better, in that case.

"Now, while I like poems, Will is the most...soft among all of us, so I can explain it to you but if you want a more specific explanation maybe you can ask him".

"It's very romantic" she said, resting her chin on her hand and sighing "I like it when you read them".

Mike's face reddened, "Uhm, yeah they are. We can – I mean, I can read some to you if you want, sometimes".

She nodded excitedly and then he went on with his explanation.

Eleven was so, so captured by the way his lips moved – it was probably one of her favorite things about him –, it felt as if they were calling her, drawing her in with every thing he said.

"But what do you think of when you think of love?" she asked abruptly, interrupting him.

Mike stared at her mouth agape for a second, then he simply answered with the first thing that flashed in his mind "I think of the night you got back and I saw you after so long, and the way something fluttered in my stomach".

Eleven's eyes sparked and she smiled so brightly at him, he felt he was going to explode.

"And I also think of how *good* it felt when I could finally hug you, and of how much pain I felt when you were gone – I think that's love, it's you and me together".

As he finished talking he blushed hard, smacking himself mentally: why didn't he stop himself?

Before he even saw her moving, Eleven shot up from her seat and hugged him tightly, both falling to the ground laughing a little.

With her, it was so perfect he couldn't even put it into words if he wanted to. It just felt right, meant to be, it clicked.

She didn't even give him time to breathe after laughing so hard, she just smashed their lips together, rolling on the wooden floor; Mike looked into her eyes and felt like he would *kill* for her without hesitation.

Eleven pulled him to her and pressed their lips together once again, tangling her hands in his hair – maybe Shakespeare wasn't so bad.